A REBUTTAL TO KRANTZ' STEP THREE APPROACH TO SASQUATCH IDENTIFICATION

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ABSTRACT

Because there exists the possibility that the putative sasquatches may be higher primates, and possibly even a hominid genus, caution should be exercised before taking a specimen is advocated. The standards for scientific study that apply to lower orders should not be hurriedly applied to all of the higher orders, particularly when the higher primates are concerned.

In the recently published *The Scientist Looks at the Sasquatch,* (Sprague and Krantz, editors, 1977) co-editor Grover Krantz offers a commentary on present and past efforts to identify and study the putative sasquatches, and offers five steps to be followed for the effective scientific study and identification of these alledged new primates. Briefly, they are:

1. Collection of sightings and footprint evidence
2. Recovery of skeletal remains and/or a skin
3. "the killing of a specimen" (Krantz 1977:17)
4. Capture of a live animal
5. Study of their behavior in the wild[1]

He offers by way of justification for the sequence of these steps the fact that no proof has been offered or verified that the sasquatches are human or sufficiently hominid to rate the same kind of legal protection we humans extend to others of our own kind. Our legal system is based on the concept that one is innocent (in the United States in particular) until proven guilty. I would like to advance the concept that the sasquatch should be considered as an unknown animal that has, according to the majority of sighting reports, exhibited a number of characteristics that indicate that it may be one of the higher primates, including some alledged characteristics that may, and I emphasize the *may*, ultimately place them in a category quite close to the genus *Homo*, and conceivably even within the genus. The point is that at present, we do *not know*. We do not know if the sasquatches are relict gigantopithecines, relict neanderthals, relict australopithecines, relict *Homo erectus*, "stick Indians", a new race of humans, evolved gorillas, agents of extraterrestial forces, or simply the figment of observers' imaginations. We do not know.

And since we do not know, let us be careful in following a procedure that is designed to examine new "animals" of lower orders. I would have no objection to following all five steps when studying an alledged new species

of fish, or snake, or gopher. I suggest that a different order of procedure be followed when studying what may be a new higher primate, and perhaps, perhaps, a very high primate indeed.

My order of steps, which Krantz (1977:17) alludes to with disapproval "....yet there are some people actively engaged in step five, the study of their wild behavior.", would be as follows:

1. The collection of sighting accounts and footprint casts

2. A search for skeletal remains and/or skin

3. Co-incident with 2, an attempt to place oneself in a position where a study of their behavior in the wild can be accomplished. Then, depending on what step 2 or step 3 show us, proceed with one of the following alternatives:

   a. The capture of a live specimen under scientific conditions.

   b. The taking of a specimen or alternately depending on the results of 2 and 3

   c. establishing a hands-off policy.

The point I am offering here is that we must tread softly when using the powers of life and death in the name of "science." We do not know positively whether the sasquatches exist, much less if they are or are not close to the genus *Homo*, yet, since the possibility exists, due to rumors of erect bipedalism, human-like faces, an ability to elude capture, communication in an unknown language, ability to unfasten and untie food parcels and packsacks, and the interesting and persistant stories from Indians about hairy "Stick Indians" who have grown hair and dropped out from civilization, we should proceed with the same kind of caution that we would if reports had come in from Borneo that a number of large, erect, *hairless*, man-like beings had been seen. In that event, we would proceed to step five in Krantz' sequence immediately before loading a single gun.

Yet, because these reports feature *hairy* bodies, and not hairless bodies, we have persons who feel this is license to shoot first and ask questions afterward. Akin to the general in Vietnam who once said that (about a destroyed village) "It was necessary to destroy it in order to save it." I deplore this form of scientific arrogance.

Last, an interesting issue is raised by this debate. If, by using step five, and step two, we do indeed discover that the sasquatches are in fact relict gigantopithecines and are presently equipped with enough characteristics as to be considered a new hominid genus, are we then to establish a policy of peaceful co-existence or are we to treat a fellow genus as we have treated the pongids?

Note

[1]Such a study is being undertaken by Project Grendel, P.O. Box 444 Northgate, Seattle, Washington 98125, under my direction.

References Cited

Krantz, Grover S.
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